

February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022

## Celebrating Black History Month



In addition to the United Nations recognition starting in 2015 to 2024, the Internal Decade for People of African Descent, we will be celebrating across the country the 34th Black History month. The theme is ***February and Forever: Celebrating Black History today and every day.*** Building on the theme I am reframing Black History Month, as a time for recognition, reflection and the reclaiming of Black People's excellence, economic, cultural, and social contributions as the true history that has been erased from or whitewashed within our history.

Black history in Canada began between 1600-1610 yet Black history comprises only 5% of some history texts.

In 2012, CUPW proudly participated in uncovering the history of Toronto's First Black Postman, Albert Jackson, so the union could honour the family by having a laneway in Harbord Village where he lived and worked named for him. In 2012 a play called The Postman also debuted as a walking play of Jackson's postal route, then finally in 2017 there was an unveiling of a plaque to honour him downtown at the former site of the Toronto General Post Office where Jackson picked up his mail for delivery.

This is just one of thousands of discoveries of Black History that continues to come to light.

I would like to invite members to celebrate Black History by seeking out and participating in the many rich BHM events whether it be panel discussions, theatre productions, seminars, poetry readings, spoken word or any other events in person or online. I would also invite you to go beyond that by being curious about why Black History has been excluded from our history and take action to correct that omission in your life and community.

**Below are links to activities and resources:**

<https://facingcanada.facinghistory.org/black-history-month-resources>.

<https://blackhistorysociety.ca/kick-off-event-2022>

[http://education.historicacanada.ca/files/145/FR\\_BlackHistory\\_FINALPRINTFILE.pdf](http://education.historicacanada.ca/files/145/FR_BlackHistory_FINALPRINTFILE.pdf)

<https://ici.radio-canada.ca/nouvelle/1745986/histoire-noirs-autochtones-ecole-curriculum-obhs>

Many members have asked about allyship and what that looks like. The truth is, allyship is vast and broad but can't be explored, by being a bystander and not doing your own education. Black History Month is the perfect starting place and opportunity to act so you will be identified by the Black Community as being an ally demonstrated by your true solidarity.

In 2022, CUPW will continue its anti-racism and anti-oppression work because "until we are all free, no one is free!"

Enjoy the celebration of Black History, Excellence, Contributions and Joy!!

In solidarity,

Jan Simpson  
National President

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